Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the specification as shown:

Please delete the paragraph on page 3, lines 12-13 and replace it with the following paragraph:

Figure 2 depicts the molecular structures of Tat-C* **(SEQ ID NO: 1)** used in the working examples (where C* is fluorescein), TAR RNA **(SEQ ID NO: 2)** and dTAR RNA **(SEQ ID NO: 3)**.

Please delete the paragraph on page 24, lines 7-12 and replace it with the following paragraph:

Other examples of PBP's which can be used include the matrix protein (M1, with a sequence of "DPNNMDKAVKLYRKLKR" **SEQ ID NO: 4;** in single letter code) which binds to Type A influenza virus RNA, and hnRNP U protein ("MRGGNFRGGAPGNRGGYNRRGN" **SEQ ID NO: 5;** in single letter code) which binds to pre-ribosomal RNA. For example, M1 can be used in an assay to detect influenza virus in a sample, similar to the working example shown for HIV.

Please delete the paragraph on page 32, lines 10-16 and replace it with the following paragraph:

Another peptide sequence labeled with fluorescein at N-terminus (SH3-C*; AKPRPPRPLPVAC **SEQ ID NO: 6;** in single letter code) which cannot specifically binding to TAR RNA was also utilized as the signal probe. Figure 9 ([SH3-C* or Tat-C*]=1.0×10^{-8} M, [TAR RNA]=1.0×10^{-8} M and [oligomer **1**] =8.0×10^{-8} M) shows C* emission only when the Tat-C* was present. These FRET differences demonstrate that the HIV TRA RNA sensor of this invention depends on the specific interaction of Tat peptide sequence with TAR RNA.